

Census Bureau Transformation and Modernization Activities

Discussants:

Dr. James Thomas Tucker (NAC Chair)

Cherokee Bradley (NAC Vice-Chair)

National Advisory Committee 2022 Spring Virtual Meeting

May 5-6, 2022

We applaud Director Santos and Census staff for new initiatives to improve the count

- Encouraging innovation among career staff and Census partners
- Utilizing new statistical methods to improve data accuracy
- Balancing privacy with priority use needs for accurate data
- Building a more data consumer-driven model for Census products
- More frequent engagement with stakeholders, academics and public

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Commitment to adding a Sexual Orientation Gender Identity (SOGI) question on Census surveys



POPULATION

Census Survey Now Asks about Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity

Phase 3.2 of the Household Pulse Survey now includes questions on sexual orientation and gender identity, vaccinations of children and the new Child Tax Credit.

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7. What is this person's race?
Mark ☒ one or more boxes **AND** print origins.

☐ White – Print, for example, German, Irish, English, Italian, Lebanese, Egyptian, etc. ↴

☐ Black or African Am. – Print, for example, African American, Jamaican, Haitian, Nigerian, Ethiopian, Somali, etc. ↴

☐ American Indian or Alaska Native – Print name of enrolled or principal tribe(s), for example, Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe, Mayan, Aztec, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Traditional Government, Nome Eskimo Community, etc. ↴

<input type="checkbox"/> Chinese	<input type="checkbox"/> Vietnamese	<input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian
<input type="checkbox"/> Filipino	<input type="checkbox"/> Korean	<input type="checkbox"/> Samoan
<input type="checkbox"/> Asian Indian	<input type="checkbox"/> Japanese	<input type="checkbox"/> Chamorro
<input type="checkbox"/> Other Asian – Print, for example, Pakistani, Cambodian, Hmong, etc. ↴		<input type="checkbox"/> Other Pacific Islander – Print, for example, Tongan, Fijian, Marshallese, etc. ↴

☐ Some other race – Print race or origin. ↴

**Commitment to
collaborating with the OMB
and Working Group to
timely update the outdated
1997 OMB Race and
Ethnicity Standards ...**

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... and to update those standards to add a Middle Eastern North African (MENA) check box on Census surveys

MENA Category

What is your race or ethnicity? Mark all boxes that apply **AND** print your specific ethnicities in the spaces below. Note, you may report more than one group.

☐ **White** – Print specific ethnicities, for example, German, Irish, English, Italian, Polish, French, etc.

☐ **Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin** – Print specific ethnicities, for example, Mexican or Mexican American, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Dominican, Salvadoran, Colombian, etc.

☐ **Black or African Am.** – Print specific ethnicities, for example, African American, Jamaican, Haitian, Nigerian, Ethiopian, Ghanaian, etc.

☐ **Asian** – Print specific ethnicities, for example, Chinese, Filipino, Asian Indian, Vietnamese, Korean, Japanese, etc.

☐ **American Indian or Alaska Native** – Print specific ethnicities, for example, Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe, Muscogee (Creek) Nation, Mayan, Doyon, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Traditional Government, etc.

☐ **Middle Eastern or North African** – Print specific ethnicities, for example, Lebanese, Iranian, Egyptian, Syrian, Moroccan, Algerian, etc.

☐ **Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander** – Print specific ethnicities, for example, Native Hawaiian, Samoan, Guamanian or Chamorro, Tongan, Fijian, Marshallese, etc.

☐ **Some other race or ethnicity** – Print specific race(s) and/or ethnicities.

☐ **Middle Eastern or North African** – Print specific ethnicities, for example, Lebanese, Iranian, Egyptian, Syrian, Moroccan, Algerian, etc.



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Introducing the Office of Strategic Alliances

The U.S. Census Bureau is pleased to announce the transition of the 2020 Census National Partnership Program to the Office of Strategic Alliances (OSA), an evergreen partnership initiative.

OSA aims to expand ways to disseminate Census Bureau data to non-traditional users and collaborate with national stakeholders to increase responses to the Census Bureau's economic and demographic censuses and surveys. The Office of Strategic Alliances is leveraging the work performed during the 2020 Census to improve methods for future censuses.



Maria Olmedo-Malagon, Chief

Anna Owens, Deputy Chief

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Tribal Relations Specialists



Jessica Imotichey
Chickasaw Nation (OK)
Resides in Pueblo Laguna, NM



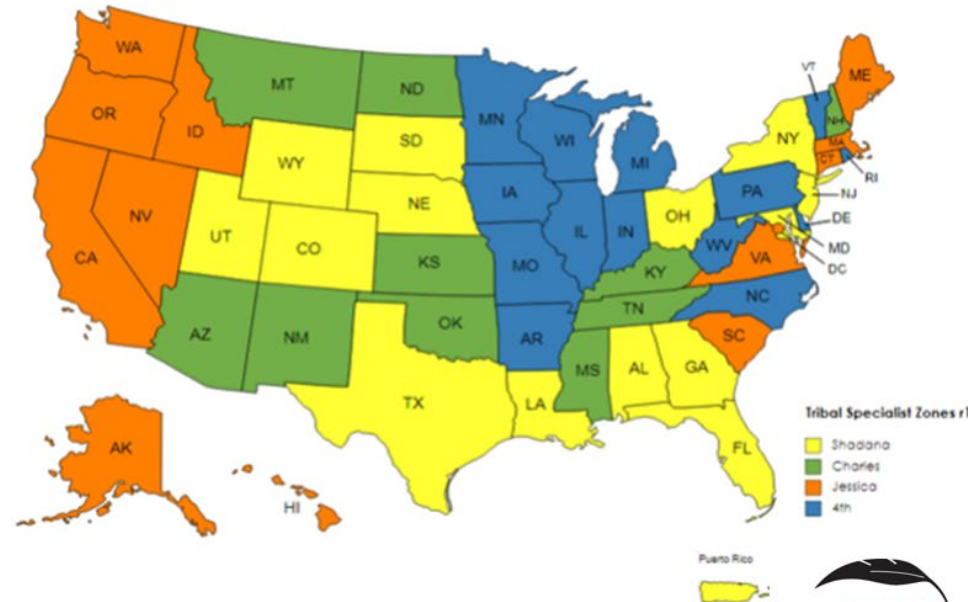
Shadana Sultan
Oglala -Lakota Nation (SD)
Resides in Denver, CO



Charles Tippeconnic
Comanche Nation (OK)
Resides in Elgin, OK



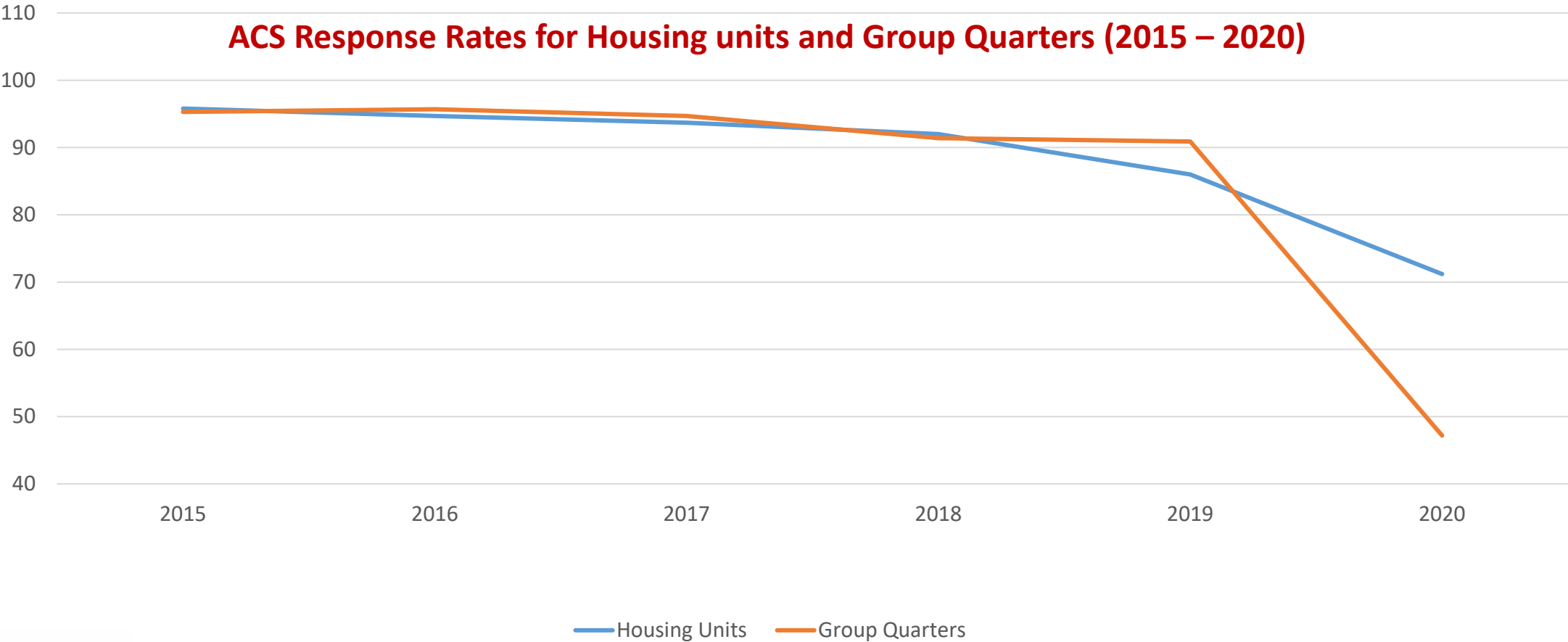
Fourth Specialist
TBA



**But we have to overcome many more barriers
to get a complete and accurate count ...**



Need to Reverse Declining ACS Response Rates



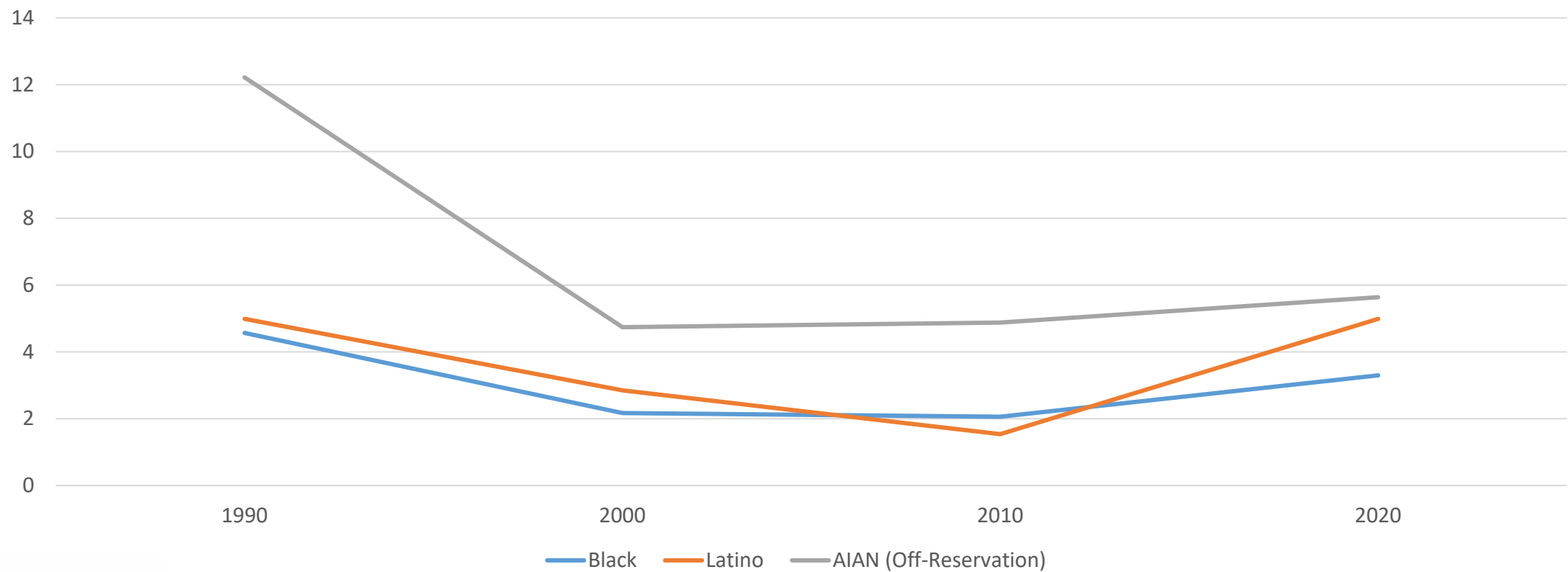
The Need to Eliminate the Persistent Undercount of People of Color and Young Children

“What’s Past is Prologue; What to Come, in Yours and My Discharge.”

William Shakespeare
The Tempest, Act 2, Scene 1

The Need to Eliminate the Persistent Undercount of People of Color and Young Children

Undercount of Identified Populations of Color (1990 – 2020)



The Need to Eliminate the Persistent Undercount of People of Color and Young Children

Post-Enumeration Survey *and*
Demographic Analysis

**The 2020 Census undercounted many
of the same population groups we have
historically undercounted, and it
overcounted others.**

March 10, 2022

The Need to Eliminate the Persistent Undercount of People of Color and Young Children

Percent Net Coverage Error by Race and Hispanic Origin: 2010 and 2020

Post-Enumeration Survey and
Demographic Analysis

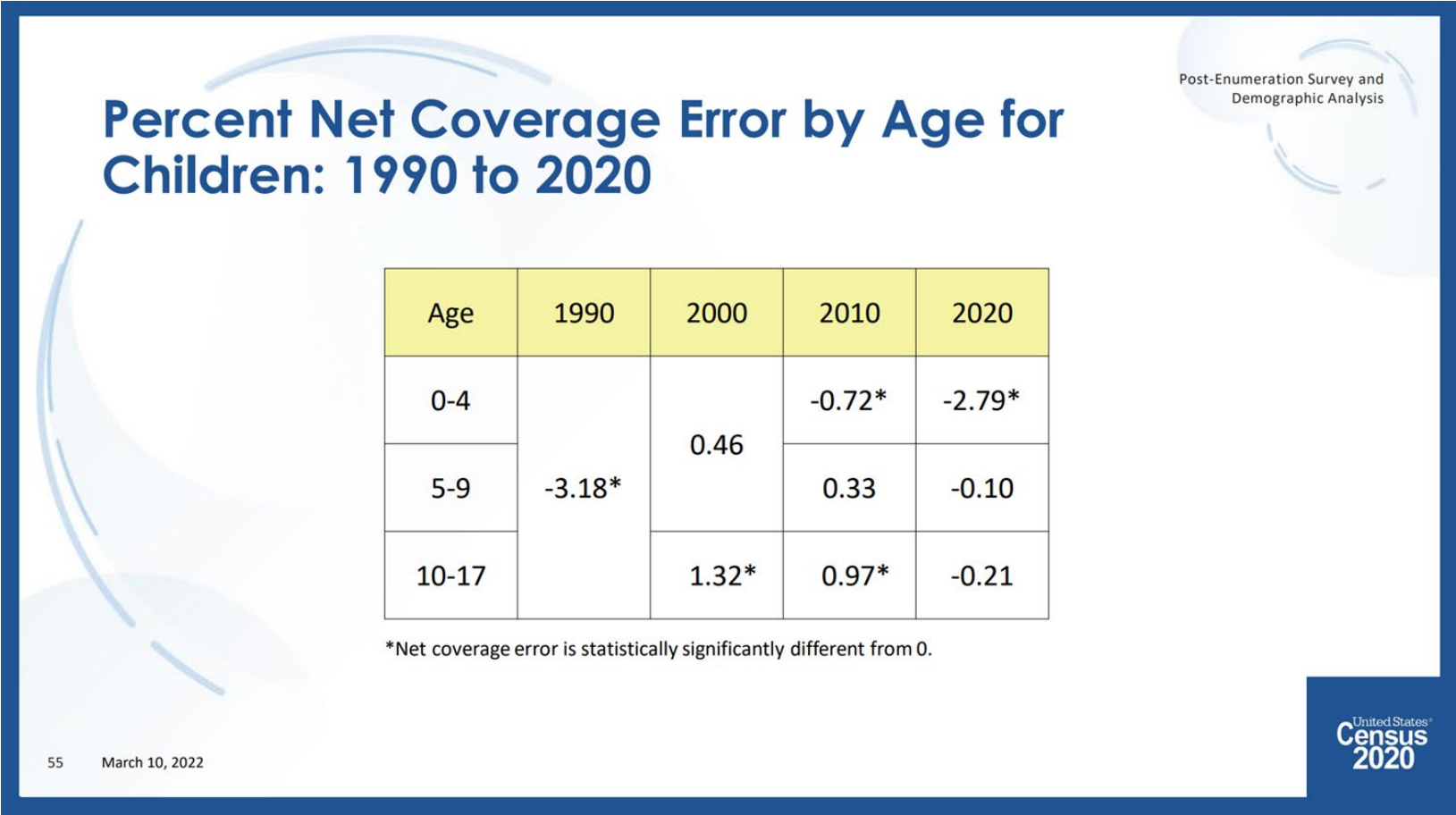
Race or Hispanic Origin	2010	2020
Total	0.01	-0.24
Race alone or in combination		
White	0.54*	0.66*
Non-Hispanic White alone	0.83*	1.64*
Black or African American	-2.06*	-3.30*
Asian	0.00	2.62*
American Indian or Alaska Native	-0.15	-0.91*
On Reservation	-4.88*	-5.64*
American Indian Areas Off Reservation	3.86	3.06
Balance of the United States	0.05	-0.86*
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	-1.02	1.28
Some Other Race	-1.63*	-4.34*
Hispanic or Latino	-1.54*	-4.99*

*Net coverage error is statistically significantly different from 0.

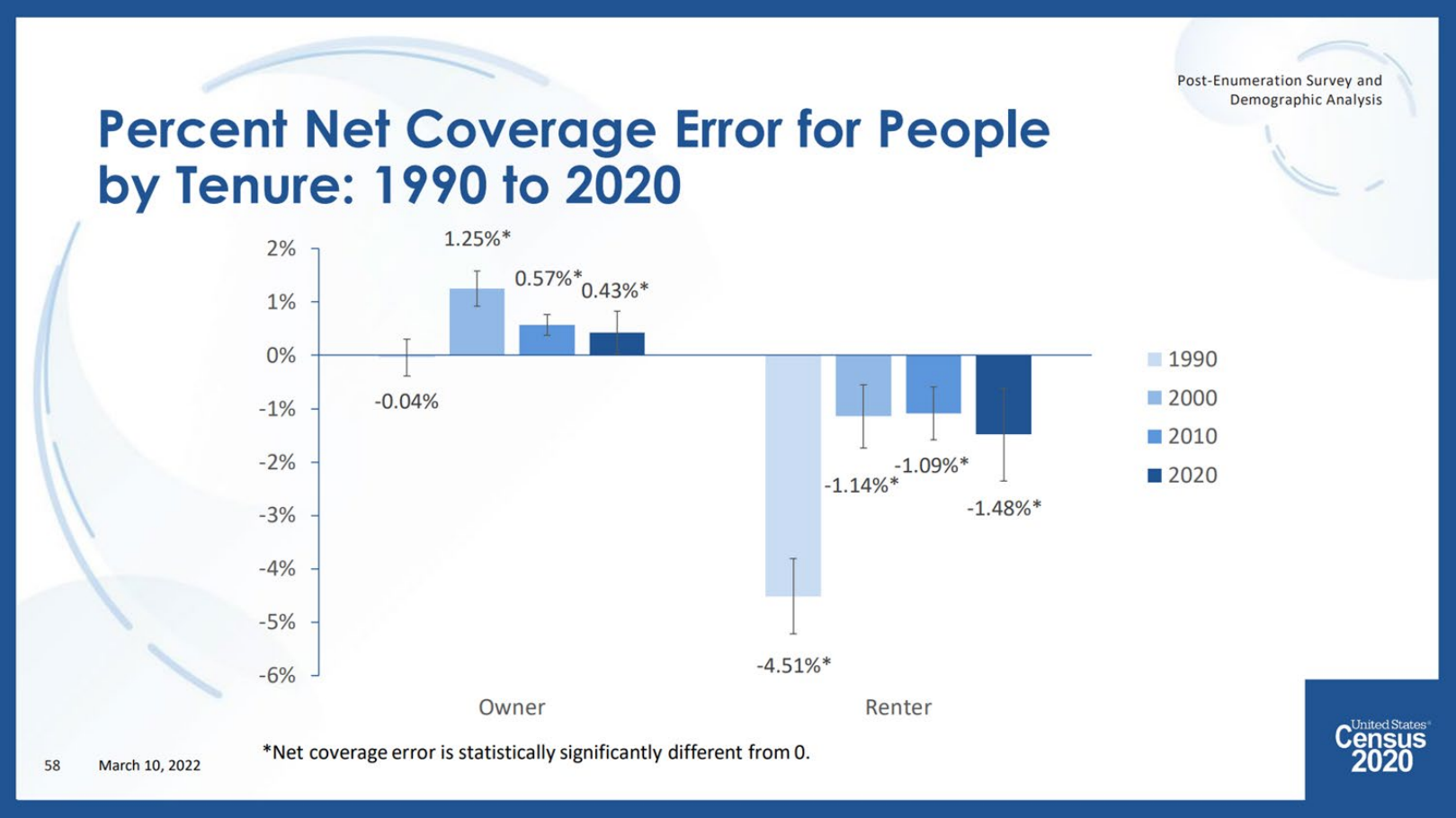
53 March 10, 2022

United States[®]
Census
2020

The Need to Eliminate the Persistent Undercount of People of Color and Young Children

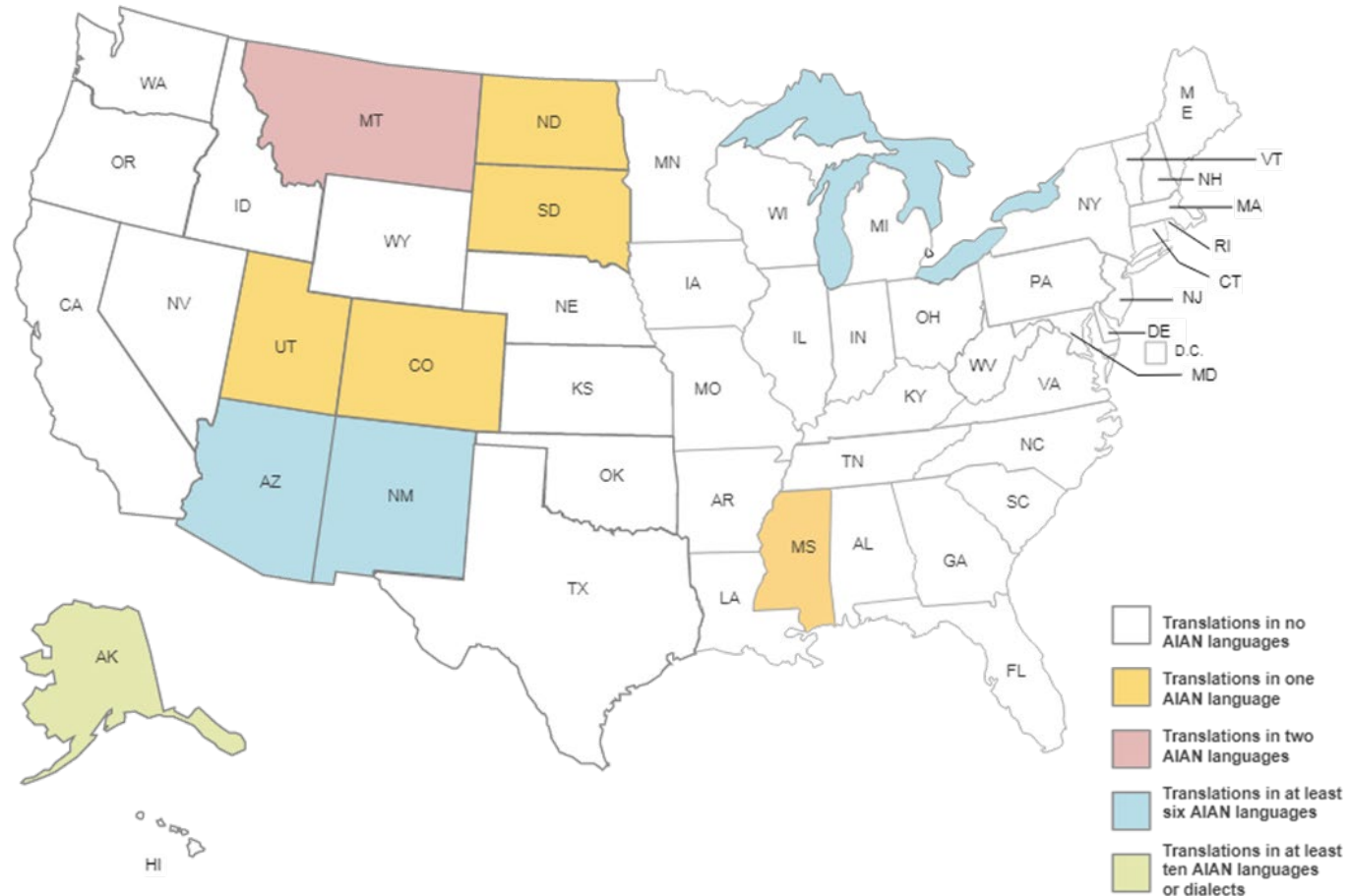


The Need to Eliminate the Persistent Undercount by Tenure of Housing (Owner vs. Renter)

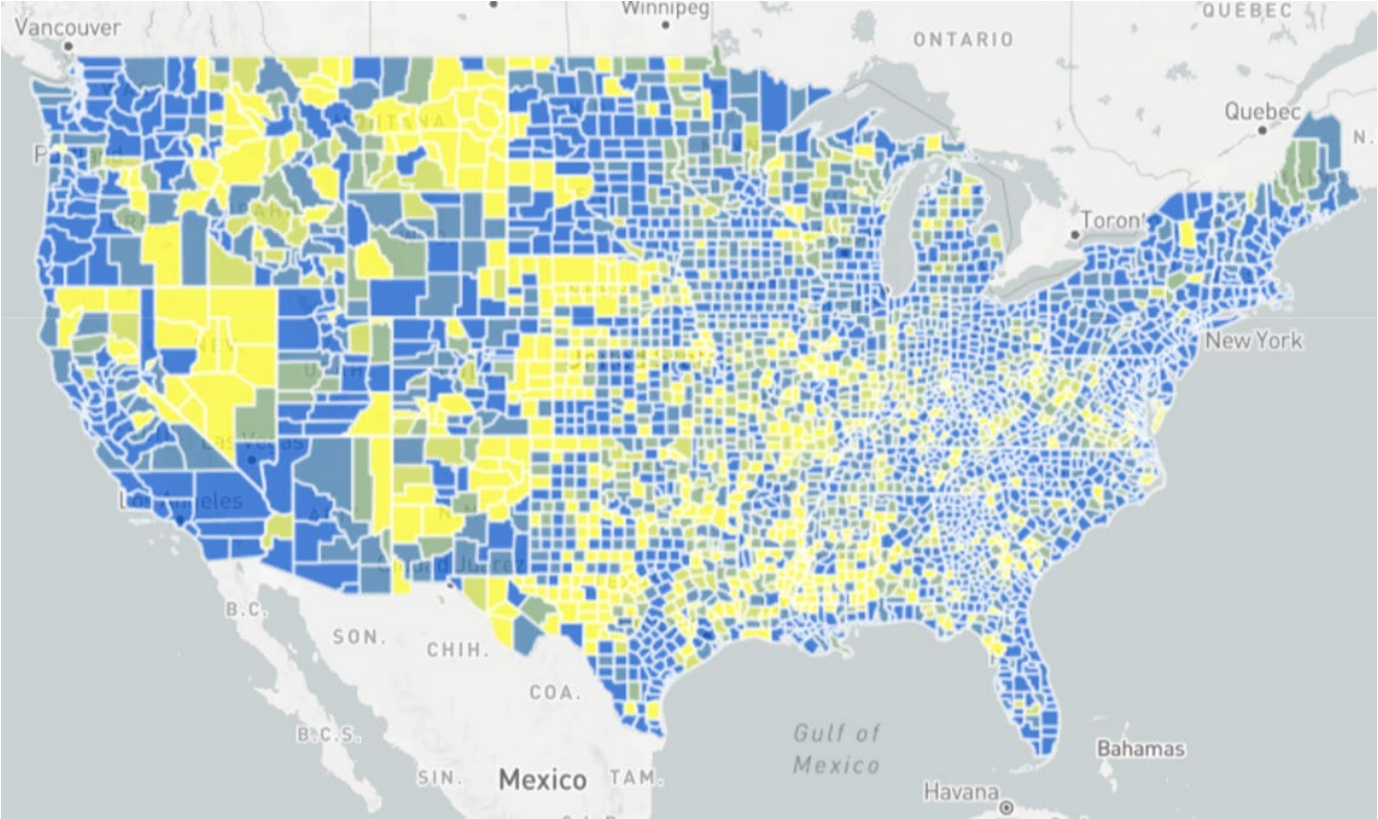
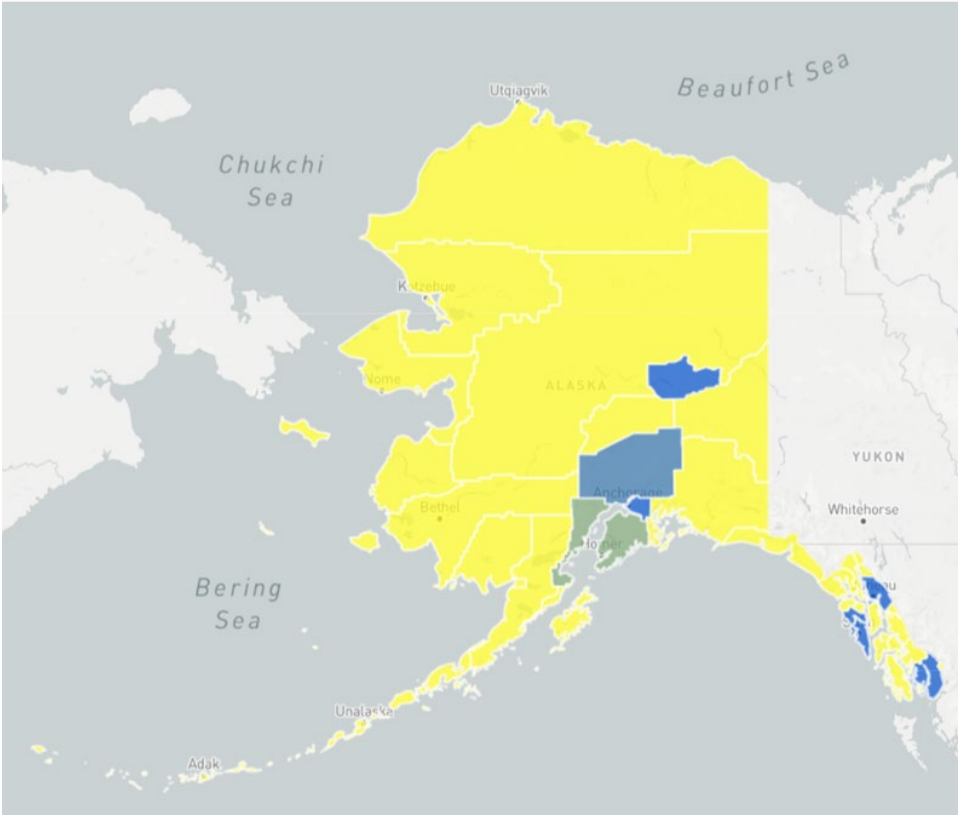


The Need to Address Lack of Translations in AIAN, NHPI and Many Asian Languages and Dialects

Native American Rights Fund
American Indian Alaska Native (AIAN) Translations Offered by Private Groups

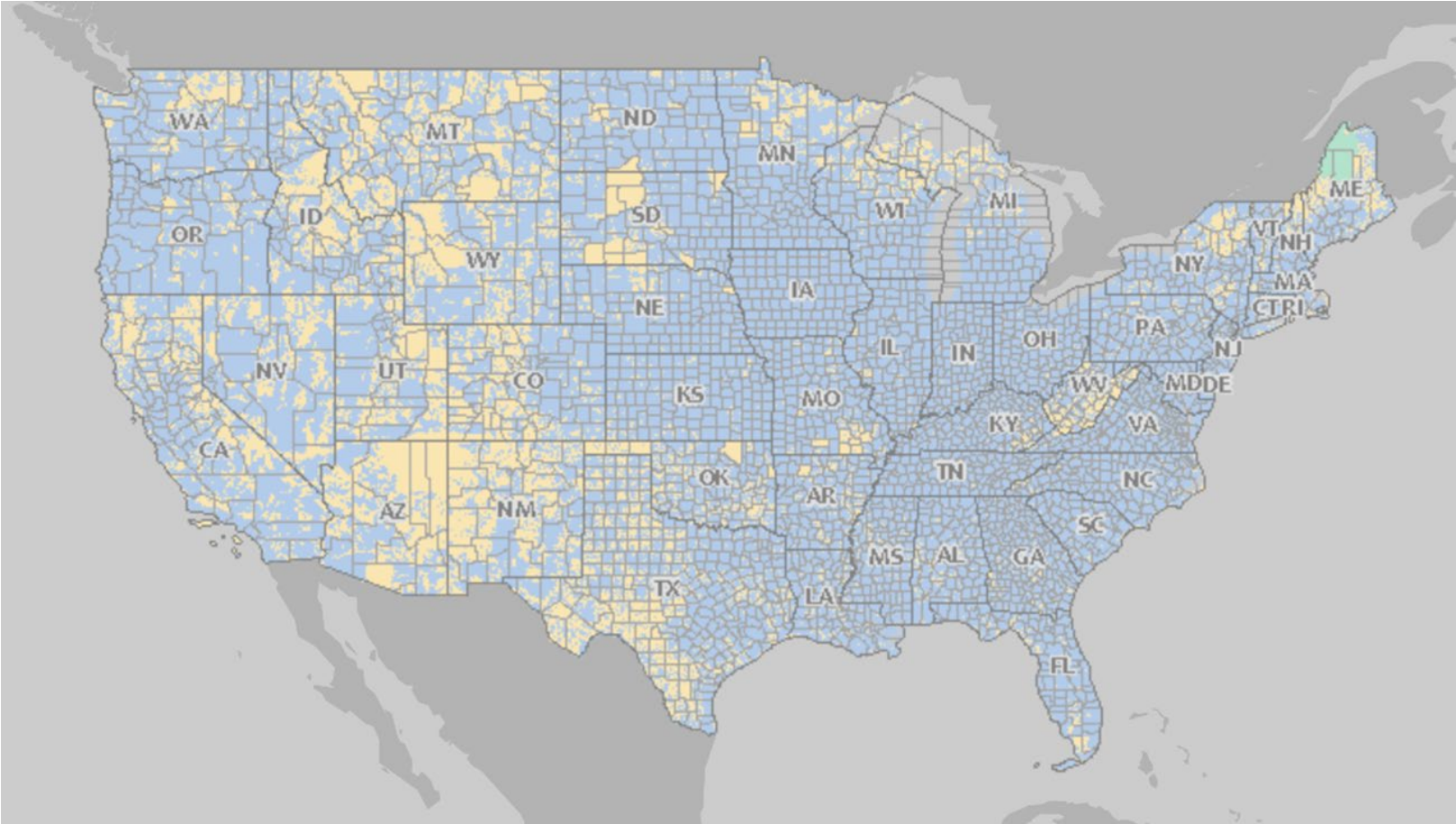


The Need to Address Lack of Broadband Access and Affordability in Indian Country and Rural Areas



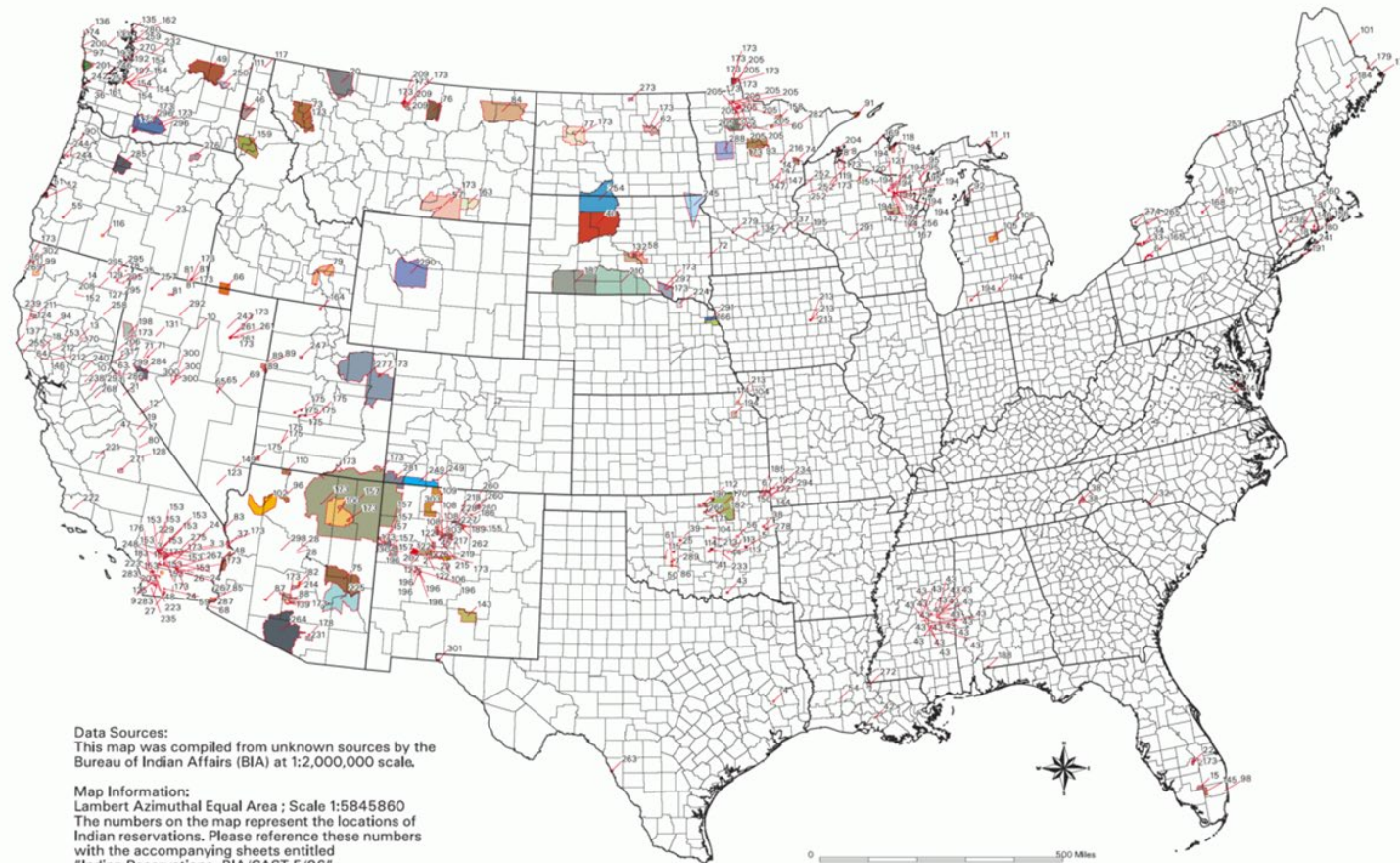
The Need to Make Census Mailings Available to all Households, Include Those with Nontraditional Addresses

Housing Unit Percent Total	Type of Enumeration Area
95.45%	Self-Response
4.52%	Update Leave
0.01%	Update Enumerate
0.02%	Remote Alaska



AIAN Households Are Disproportionately Affected by Lack of Mailing to Nontraditional Addresses

Indian Reservations in the Continental United States



Suggestions for Further Discussion: Timing

- The Census Bureau has started decennial operations six weeks early for its Remote Alaska operations
 - ✓ Acknowledges that more time is needed to reach and to count historically undercounted households, such as those in Alaska Native areas
 - ✓ Has been effective at closing (but not eliminating) the gap in the count between Alaska Natives and Non-Hispanic Whites
- The Bureau should initiate a study now to identify those areas where an early start to decennial operations would improve the count, such as in:
 - ✓ Tribal areas and reservations in the Lower Forty-Eight
 - ✓ Update Enumerate and Update Leave areas
 - ✓ Other areas with persistently low self-response or non-response rates (especially in areas with historically undercounted communities of color)

Suggestions for Further Discussion: Specialists

- The Tribal Relations Specialist program is a great start
 - ✓ “Evergreens” the tribal partnership specialist program that was effective in developing relations and improving trust with tribal nations during the decennial field operations
 - ✓ We appreciate having four Tribal Relations Specialists, but they remain under-resourced; they have to cover 573 federally recognized tribes and other tribes spread out, limiting how much time each specialist can commit for particular tribes
- A similar specialist program should be established for each of the other historically undercounted population groups and other emerging communities of color

Suggestions for Further Discussion: Consultations

- The Census Bureau has been very proactive in conducting tribal consultations, with Dee Alexander and her staff receiving a lot of support from Census leadership
- Regular consultations should occur in collaboration with other national, state and local organizations representing historically undercounted populations and communities of color
- Focus should be on working with stakeholders, community NGOs and other civic leaders to identify barriers to completing Census surveys and how to overcome them

Suggestions for Further Discussion: Field Tests

- The Census Bureau should request appropriations to expand the use of field tests to identify solutions to barriers to participation by historically undercounted populations and communities of color
- For example, the Census Bureau cancelled three field tests in 2017 because of budgetary uncertainty
 - ✓ Those field tests would have concentrated on the barriers posed by nontraditional addressing, which continue to inhibit Census operations and impeded the effectiveness of the 2020 count in many communities
 - ✓ The field tests were scheduled for three areas with high levels of nontraditional addressing: The Colville Reservation (WA), Standing Rock Reservation (ND and SD), and Puerto Rico

Suggestions for Further Discussion: Language

- Lack of translations and language support impedes participation in Census surveys among American Indian and Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander and MENA households
- In past Census decennial operations, the Bureau offered microgrants to facilitate translations for languages not covered by the Bureau
 - ✓ Proved challenging for the Census Bureau
 - ✓ Census Bureau not very well equipped to administer microgrant programs
- The Census Bureau should collaborate with national partners to develop a translation program overseen by those partners through Commerce Department grants (e.g., AFN for Alaska Native languages, etc.)

Suggestions for Further Discussion: Addressing

- Every household should receive Census mailings, regardless of whether or not the household has a nontraditional address
 - ✓ The Bureau can work with the U.S. Postal Service to develop residential street addresses for PO Boxes in rural areas (most urban post offices provide this service already)
 - ✓ Lack of Census mailings hurts rural and reservation communities because mail often is the best means of reaching them due to lack of cellular and broadband coverage
- Census staff need to timely develop a strategy to work with affected communities to resolve the addressing barrier

Suggestions for Further Discussion: Broadband

- Free mobile hot spots (some using portable satellites, in particularly remote areas) were very effective in making cellular and broadband more accessible to tribal areas in the 2020 Census
 - ✓ The Office of Strategic Alliances, as part of its outreach to businesses, should develop partnerships with telecom companies to offer this service during Census operations (decennial, ACS and other surveys)
 - ✓ Work with local partners to spread the word of the availability of this service
- Geofencing should be expanded to better target culturally appropriate messaging to communities of color

Suggestions for Further Discussion: Resources

- Many of the ways we have identified to improve the count for historically undercounted populations and communities of color require increased resources
- Suggestions for resources:
 - ✓ Prioritize existing Census appropriations for outreach and improving the counts of populations of color and households with children under five years of age
 - ✓ Allocate more resources for the Office of Strategic Alliances
 - ✓ Seek more financial support from business partners for partnership activities
 - ✓ Add specific budget line items to the Bureau's appropriations requests for these programs
 - ✓ Work with congressional offices to prioritize and make permanent ACS survey operations

Our goal for all population groups...



Comments and Committee Discussion

